

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 176/91 Fear of Torture/Fear of "Disappearance"

21 May 1991

PERU: **Marcela VALDEZ DE LA CRUZ, 35-year-old teacher (f)**

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the physical safety of a teacher and mother of two children, Marcela Valdez de la Cruz, who is a member of the Sindicato Unico de Trabajadores en la Educación (SUTEP), the Educational Workers Trade Union.

She was reportedly detained on 17 May 1991 by members of the Policía Técnica, the investigative police, on leaving her home in the La Magdalena area of the city of Ayacucho, Ayacucho department.

According to reports, the detention of Marcela Valdez was acknowledged by the police until 20 May, when relatives were informed that she had been transferred to the "Los Cabitos" military barracks.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

For the last eight years Amnesty International has received numerous reports of incommunicado and unacknowledged detentions from Peru, some of which have led to "disappearances". Most of them have occurred in rural areas and have been carried out by uniformed members of the security forces, who often refuse to acknowledge the detentions. Many of those detained by the armed forces "disappear" indefinitely; others are released after days or weeks in secret custody, during which time they may be subjected to torture. Sometimes their detention is acknowledged, after prolonged secret detention and interrogation.

In these cases, detentions are only acknowledged to have occurred as of the date the detainees are transferred from military to police custody, when public prosecutors are informed of the detention. The armed forces as a rule never acknowledge having held prisoners prior to their transfer to the police. This is a major contributing factor to the continuing practice of torture and "disappearance".

Human rights violations take place in a context of increasingly violent activities by armed opposition groups, especially "Sendero Luminoso", which has claimed responsibility for hundreds of execution-style killings of government officials, leaders of left-wing political parties and members of peasant communities believed to have cooperated with the armed forces.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes and airmail letters:

- expressing concern for the physical safety of Marcela Valdez de la Cruz and asking that, while held in detention, she be given access to relatives, a doctor and a lawyer;
- requesting that she be brought before a competent judicial authority within the term provided for by law.

APPEALS TO:

Presidente Alberto Fujimori
 Presidente de la República
 Palacio de Gobierno
 Plaza de Armas
 Lima 1, Perú

Telegrams: Presidente Fujimori, Lima, Peru
Telexes: 20167 PE PALACIO; 20331 PE SEC PRE
Faxes: + 51 14 33 7020

General Jorge Torres Aciego
 Ministro de Defensa
 Ministerio de Defensa
 Avenida Boulevard s/n
 Monterrico
 Lima 33, Perú

Telegrams: Ministro Defensa Torres, Lima, Peru
Telexes: 25483 PE COMGREGJ
Faxes: + 51 14 35 4470

Jefe del Comando Político-Militar de Ayacucho
 General Petronio Fernández Dávila
 Cuartel Militar BIM 51 "Los Cabitos"
 Huamanga
 Ayacucho, Perú

Telegrams: Jefe Político-Militar, Ayacucho, Peru
Telexes: 64740 PE IPSS AYA ("please forward immediately
to General Petronio Fernandez Davila")
64734; 64735

COPIES TO:

Señores
 COMISEDH (Comisión de Derechos Humanos)
 Apartado Postal 11-0247
 Lima 11, PERU

Faxes: + 51 14 31 4334

and to diplomatic representatives of Peru in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
 or your section office, if sending appeals after 2 July 1991.